



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy

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MEMORANDUM DM 06-02

TO: All Virginia Underground Coal Mine Operators

FROM: Frank A. Linkous, Chief
Division of Mines

SUBJECT: **Symposium on Wireless Communications Technology February 13, 2006,
and Discussions on Underground Mine Safety**

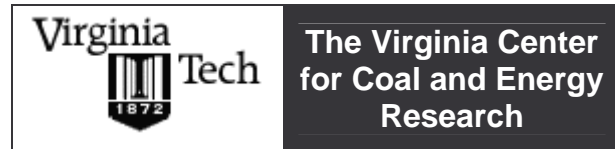
DATE: February 3, 2006

The occurrence of 18 fatalities in the nation's coal mines in the past 30 days has called attention to the need for an increased focus on mine safety. In Virginia, 2005 represented the safest year in the history of coal mining in our Commonwealth. However, we must continue to improve upon our mine safety performance by remaining committed to working safely every day. We are taking the following immediate actions to assist you and your workers to have a safer workplace.

Division of Mines Inspectors and Specialists have begun coal mine safety inspections that will extend over the next seven days and focus on the "point of control" -- the working section(s). These inspections will be conducted on all shifts and weekends. Priority will be given to review and evaluations of emergency response capabilities, evidence of effective management control within the mining process, and compliance with mandates of law and approved mining plans. To help you meet the MSHA request for safety talks on Monday, February 6, 2006 shifts, we would like to remind you that DMME has information that could be used in the safety talks on our web site at <http://www.mme.state.va.us/Dm/default.htm>.

DMME is meeting today with representatives of Virginia's six mine rescue teams to discuss preliminary findings from the WV accidents and changes needed to ensure timely mine rescue response. On February 6, 2006, a special called meeting of the Virginia Mine Safety Board will be held to consider recommendations to improve safety including the use of a second means of communication in underground mines; the need for additional self-contained self-rescuers for use during emergencies; and mine seal construction standards.

We strongly encourage you to attend a special symposium on wireless communication and location systems at 9 a.m. on Monday, February 13, 2006, at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon, VA. The purpose of the symposium is to assess the current capabilities of such wireless technology and where gaps in the technology may exist. The attached brochure provides additional information on the symposium.



Symposium on the Capabilities and Availability of Wireless Communication and Tracking Systems for Underground Coal Mines

When: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Monday, February 13, 2006

Where: Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center
Virginia Highlands Community College Campus, Abingdon, VA

Who should attend?

Virginia coal mine operators and safety directors.

Introduction

The occurrence of 18 fatalities in the nation's coal mines in the past 30 days has called attention to the need for an increased focus on mine safety. Underground coal mine communications and miner tracking systems have been considered as a priority area of concern in the wake of these mine accidents.

The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) and the Virginia Center for Coal and Energy Research are holding this meeting to address the capabilities and availability of wireless communication and location systems in underground coal mines. The need for continued mine safety vigilance will be discussed with coal industry participants.

Vendors confirmed as of 2/3/2006

Austdac Pty Ltd

Rod Gilmour
Unit 1
4 Packard Avenue
Castle Hill
NSW 2154
Australia
+61 (2) 8851 5000
<http://www.austdac.com.au/>

Delta Electric (Varis Mining Technology)

Phillip Bannister
P. O. Box 1497
Logan, West Virginia 25601
PH: 304-752-4625
www.varismine.com

Pyott-Boone Electronics

(Mine Site Technologies, - LAMP and PED systems)
Doug Coon,
International/National Sales Manager
P. O. Box 809
Tazewell, VA 24651
PH: 276-988-5505
www.pyottboone.com

CSE Corporation (Mine Site Vendor)

Chuck Edwards, Manager
600 Seco Road
Monroeville PA 15146
PH: 412-856-9200
<http://www.csecorporation.com/>

Gamma Services International, Inc.

Dwayne Towery, VP of Sales
656 Hall Street
P. O. Box 306
Clay, KY 42404
PH: 270-664-2655
www.gsimining.com

Directions: From Bristol, Tennessee, and west: Take I 81 north to Exit 14, bear right off the ramp toward Abingdon, go ¼ mile, and turn right at stop light onto Route 372E. **From Wytheville, Virginia, and east:** Take I 81 south to Exit 14, bear right off the ramp toward Abingdon, go ¼ mile, and turn right at stop light onto Route 372E. **From Bluefield, West Virginia, and north:** Take Highway 19 south to the stop light at West Main Street (Highway 11), turn right, go one mile to the second stop light, turn left onto Jonesborough Road, left again at stop light onto Route 372E.

For additional information contact the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy at (276) 523-8143.